

CHAPTER 12:

LEGAL/ ADVOCACY

CVAMC VETERANS JUSTICE OUTREACH (VJO) PROGRAM

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Does Each Veterans Affairs Medical Center have a Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist?

The most recent U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics Survey of Inmates in Local Jails (2002) indicated that:

- 9.3% of people incarcerated in jails are Veterans;
- three in five have substance dependency problems;
- almost one in three have serious mental illness;
- one in five are homeless;
- 70% committed a non violent crime.

The Roles of the Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist

- Provide consultation and education about services, application processes, and eligibility to incarcerated Veterans, their families, and the community agencies that serve them
- Provide applications for appropriate VA programs
- Advocacy as needed to help incarcerated or justice-involved Veteran access needed treatment

HOW TO ACCESS SERVICES

STEP 1: Enrollment

All Veterans must be 10-10 EZ form Application for Health Benefits

Veteran must be eligible, enrolled and meet medical criteria

CVAMC does not provide transportation

STEP 2: Applications

- Veterans can apply for admission to our residential programs while still incarcerated. Prison Counselor/social worker must make from prison must be generated from the Veterans designated Reentry Counselor/social worker directly to VJO in order to determine after care/release plan. Veterans will need to contact their designated Reentry Counselor at prison or probation/parole officer and/or other court officials as part of the may provide referral to VJO.
- The individual must be **released** from prison **and** enrolled for VA care prior to entering a residential treatment program.
- Admissions staff will assess Veteran prior to making any final decisions
- Medical need determines admission to any unit
- If Veteran **does not meet medical criteria or refuses recommended treatment**, s/he can be discharged to the community. When necessary, justice involved Veterans will be asked to complete a VA form 10-5345 to ensure communication between court officials and CVAMC as part of treatment compliance and conditions of parole/probation.
- Currently the VJO at CVAMC serves Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties. Other counties are referred to designated VJO in the assigned to the specific catchment area(s).

Valuable online resources for planning re-entry can be found at:

To Request a Copy of the Veteran's DD214/Proof of military service

Go to: <http://www.archives.gov/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf>

A DD214 is necessary to prove eligibility for state, county, and community Veterans services as well as VA services.

Planning for Release

Go to: <http://nchv.org/docs/IncarceratedVeteransGuide3rdEdition.pdf>

The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans has produced this guide to help transitioning Veterans.

Incarcerated Veterans Re-entry Guides

Go to: <http://www1.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=39>

This VA site contains guides and information on re-entry resources for all fifty states and the District of Columbia. The guide for Pennsylvania is

http://www1.va.gov/homeless/docs/IV_Pennsylvania.pdf

* Source: Incarcerated Veteran info via Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist, Torrie Osterholm; 6/2010.

COMMUNITY LEGAL/ADVOCACY RESOURCES

AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania

1211 Chestnut St., Suite 600
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-587-9377

* Only agency in Pennsylvania to provide legal services and referrals without charge to people with HIV/AIDS.

American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania

P. O. Box 40008
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215-592-1513
Website: www.aclupa.org

* Works to prevent and resolve civil rights violations

Catholic Social Services

227 N. 18th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-854-7000/7019

* Non-resident service: representation proceedings, via processing, handling appeals of legalization cases.

Chester County Bar Association

15 West Gay Street, 2nd floor
West Chester, PA 19380
610-692-1889 – Lawyer Referral
Hours: Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Closed all legal holidays.

Access to Justice Program

15 West Gay Street, 2nd floor
West Chester, PA 19380

Many hard working Chester County residents earn too much to qualify for a free legal aid lawyer, yet cannot afford the high cost of hiring a private attorney. The members of the Chester County Bar Association recognize this challenge and offer a solution with the Access to Justice Program. The Chester County Bar Association is the only bar association in the state with this unique, award winning program. This program fills the gap between pro bono and hiring an attorney at full cost. Cases accepted include:

- Simple Wills
- Power of Attorney
- Living Wills
- Bankruptcy
- Landlord-Tenant
- Elder Law
- Custody and Visitation
- No Asset Divorce
- Small Estates
- Miscellaneous cases at the discretion of the program.

Access to Justice Program

To find out if you qualify, call the Legal Aid Intake Unit at 1-877-429-5994

Hours: Monday through Friday 9 am to 1 pm. Intake workers will walk you through the qualifying process to see if you meet the income requirements.

Community Legal Services

1424 Chestnut Street

Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-981-3700

215-981-3800 Philadelphia Legal Assistance

* Provide free legal help for low-income residents of Philadelphia

Community Legal Services

3638 N. Broad Street

Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-227-2400

Hours: Monday through Friday 9am to 5 pm

* Provide free legal help for low-income residents of Philadelphia

Community Legal Services Hotlines:

-Family Advocacy Line 215-981-3765

-For parents whose children are involved with DHS.

-ABC Hotline 215-981-3756

-Helps with services/benefits for a disabled child.

-Welfare Law Line 215-227-6485

-Helps with welfare, medical assistance, childcare or other welfare programs.

-Child Support Defendant Hotline 215-981-3838

-Information for people being ordered to pay child support.

-Don't Borrow Trouble Hotline 215-523-9520

-Help for homeowners with first and second mortgages on their homes. Call anytime.

Community Satisfaction Team (CST)

520 N. Delaware Ave., 7th floor

Philadelphia, PA 19123

215-923-9627

* Family members, child and adult consumers of mental health and D and A services, assist consumers to increase their satisfaction with behavioral health programs.

Defender Association of Philadelphia

1441 Samson Street

Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-568-3190

* Criminal cases

Disability Advocacy Program

5853 Germantown Ave.

Philadelphia, PA 19144

215-726-4600

* District Administrator: Mr. Wisler @ 215-560-4825; Assistant Director: Mr. Magerman

Disability Rights Network of PA (DRN) @ drnpa-hbg@drnpa.org

Harrisburg Office

1414 N. Cameron St., Suite C
Harrisburg, PA 17103
1-800-692-7443 [Voice]; (717) 236-8110 [Voice]
1-877-375-7139 [TDD] ; (717) 346-0293 [TDD]

Philadelphia Office @ drnpa-phila@drnpa.org

The Philadelphia Building
1315 Walnut St., Suite 400
Philadelphia, PA 19107-4798
(215) 238-8070 (Voice) ; (215) 789-2498 (TDD)

Pittsburgh Office @ drnpa-pgh@drnpa.org

429 Fourth Avenue, Suite 701
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1505
(412) 391-5225 [Voice] ; (412) 467-8940 [TDD]

Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania (DRN) is a statewide, non-profit corporation designated as the federally-mandated organization to advance and protect the civil rights of adults and children with disabilities. DRN works with people with disabilities and their families to ensure their rights to live in their communities with the services they need, to receive a full and inclusive education, to live free of discrimination, abuse and neglect, and to have control and self-determination over their services.

Education Law Center

The Philadelphia Building
1315 Walnut Street, 4th floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-238-6970

Good Shepherd Mediation Program

5356 Chew Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19138
215-843-5413

* Works to resolve disputes among two or more parties with the aid of a mediator to empower persons to resolve disputes without litigation.

Homeless Advocacy Project

42 South 15th St., 4th floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-523-9595, or toll free 1-800-837-2672

* Contact: Michael Taub, Esquire 215-523-9594 (Veterans Benefits Specialist)

Housing Association of Delaware Valley

1500 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Juvenile Law Center

1315 Walnut Street, 4th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-625-0551

*Public interest law center which provides legal services to children; Specializing in reform of the child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health systems and children's health.

Lawyer Referral and Information Service

1101 Market Street, 10th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-238-6333

*Not a free service, but do provide information on other free legal services in the Philadelphia area.

Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania

Provides free civil legal services for low-income residents of Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties.

Free help is available with:

- Family Law
- Employment Law
- Protection from Abuse
- Public Benefits
- Housing Problems
- Elder Law
- Consumer and Bankruptcy Problems

Call the LASP toll-free Helpline at 1-877-429-5994.

Helpline hours are Monday through Friday, 9 am to 1 pm.

Legal Clinic for the Disabled (LCD)

<http://www.legalclinicforthedisabled.org/>

provides free legal services to low-income people with physical disabilities in Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties, Pennsylvania. LCD helps people solve a wide range of legal problems

Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania**Division of Adult Advocacy Services**

1211 Chestnut Street, 11 floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-751-1800 x 231

Information and referral: 215-751-1800 X 228; 800-688-4226

*Improves services and treatment for adults with emotional and behavioral disorders by promoting mental health and by working to improve public mental health systems through advocacy, education, community and self-help services.

Pennsylvania Bar Association Military Personnel Pro Bono Referral Program - The

Pennsylvania Bar Association has a statewide referral service in place. Assistance is provided to reservists and families in SSCRA, USERRA, and SGLI. Cases in the system are reviewed by JAGC lawyer. Free CLE training materials are available to volunteers. Phone: 800-932-0311 ext. 2236, email: Marcy.mallory@pabar.org.

PA Health Law Project

Tool Free HelpLine: 800-274-3258

www.phlp.org

PHLP provides free legal services and advocacy to Pennsylvanians having trouble accessing publicly funded health care coverage or services. For assistance, call our helpline at 1-800-274-3258 or 1-866-236-6310 TTY or e-mail us at staff@phlp.org.

PA Utility Law Project

<http://www.rhls.org/PULP.asp>

What We Do: Our mission at PULP is to assist Pennsylvania's low-income residential utility and energy consumers connect to and maintain affordable utility and energy services within their homes. We help both groups and individuals who meet the income eligibility guidelines of the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network. PULP Serves All of Pennsylvania

We specialize in:

- Assistance and information regarding utility termination and payment arrangements
- Utility customer service obligations
- Universal Service Programs
- Landlord-Tenant related utility issues
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Issues

Philadelphia Bar Association

Lawyer Referral and Information Service

1101 Market Street, 10th Floor

215-238-6333

*Reduced fee legal services, referrals to low or reduced fee legal services in Philadelphia

Pennsylvania Client Assistance Program:

About the Pennsylvania Client Assistance Program:

- CAP is an advocacy program for people with disabilities administered by the Center for Disability Law and Policy.
- CAP helps people who are seeking services from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Blindness and Visual Services, Centers for Independent Living and other programs funded under federal law.
- CAP help is provided to you at no charge, regardless of income.
- The Pennsylvania Client Assistance Program is dedicated to ensuring that the rehabilitation system in Pennsylvania is open and responsive to your needs.

CAP - Client Assistance Program Staff:

- Stephen S. Pennington, Esq., Executive Director
- Jamie C. Ray-Leonetti, Esq. Managing Attorney
- Margaret Passio-McKenna, Esq., Senior CAP Advocate
- Lee Lippi, Senior CAP Advocate Harrisburg Office

Both Steve and Lee are Vietnam Veterans. Steve was in the Navy, and Lee spent one year in country with the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).

The Client Assistance Program provides:

- Information and advice about rehabilitation programs.
- Advise on legal rights and responsibilities.
- Assistance in resolution of problems that may arise while seeking services from

- rehabilitation programs.
- Services to help pursue administrative and legal remedies to protect your rights.

Contact Information:

Philadelphia Office
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite. 800
Philadelphia, PA. 19103
Voice/TDD: (215) 557-7112; Fax: (215) 557-7602
Toll Free: (888) 745-2357

Harrisburg CAP Office :
2149 N. 2nd Street, Third Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17110
Voice/TDD: (717) 233-1593; Fax: (717) 233-1594
Toll Free: (877) 533-1593
Web Site: www.equalemployment.org; Email Address: info@equalemployment.org
LeeLippi@aol.com

Philadelphia Legal Assistance

1424 Chestnut Street
215-981-3800

- * Provide free legal help for low-income residents of Philadelphia
- *call in advance to determine which days certain issues are being handled, days and times vary.*Assistance with following issues: Welfare rights issues, medical assistance, divorce, custody, wills, estates, unemployment compensation, mortgages, bankruptcy, consumer issues, domestic violence *no criminal issues.

Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia (<http://www.pilcop.org/>)

We focus our efforts in the areas of: the delivery of health care services to children, education funding and quality, the rights of persons with disabilities, environmental health and justice, fair housing, equal employment discrimination and urban policing.

Prevention Point Philadelphia Legal Clinic

166 W. Lehigh Avenue, Basement suite
Philadelphia, PA
215-634-5272 x114

*Assistance with bench warrants, violations of parole, violations of probation, criminal record questions, DPW benefits appeals, discrimination, Name/gender changes, obtaining ID documents, police harassment, summary offenses, civil legal referrals

*All services are free

*Also available at outreach sites:

- Tuesday/Thursday 12-4:00PM @ West Lehigh; Friday 12:30-2:30 pm @ West Lehigh
- Substance Abuse Treatment Unit days 10:30am-12:30 PM @ 3rd and Girard---Health Center #6

Senior Law Center

100 South Broad Street, Suite 1810
Philadelphia, PA 19110
215-988-1244

*Helps protect legal rights of senior citizens; serves low income seniors; wide range of legal problems for seniors 60 and over.

Temple Legal Aid

1719 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19140
215-204-1800

*Provides free legal services for people with low-income, cancer, HIV, physical disabilities. Do not handle criminal cases.

St. Agatha-St. James Church

38th and Chestnut Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-386-9732

* Wednesday Evenings, 6PM - Includes medical, dental and legal clinics; meals on property

University of Pennsylvania

3400 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
215-898-8427

*Provides a variety of legal civil services (no criminal services) for low-income people

Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program - The Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program provides free attorneys to veterans and their qualifying family members who have an appeal pending at the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (Court). Contact: Case Evaluation and Placement Component, 701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 131, Washington, DC 20004; Telephone: (202) 628-8164; Toll Free: (888) 838-7727; Fax: (202) 628-8169; E-mail: mail@vetsprobono.org, <http://www.vetsprobono.org>.

Veterans Law Clinic, Widener School of Law, The Veterans Law Clinic offers free legal aid to veterans living at 150% of poverty level who have been denied benefits by the Regional Office and wish to take an appeal to the BVA. you live in Delaware or Pennsylvania, and your Regional Office has denied your claim, and you do not know where to turn, call the Veterans Law Clinic Program at 302-477-2090, 302-477-2116 or 717-541-3800 for an appointment. <http://law.widener.edu/vetclinic/index.shtml>

Women Against Abuse

P.O. Box 13758
Philadelphia, PA 19101
Office: 215-386-1280;
Hotline: 215-386-7777

*Provides emergency shelter for battered women and children, legal services and transitional housing. Call for location.

Women Against Legal Abuse Legal Unit

100 South Broad Street, 5th floor
Philadelphia, PA 19110
215-686-7082

1-888-SAFE-014 for emergency shelter

*Protection from abuse and other legal assistance for battered women. Monday-Friday 9-5pm

Women Organized Against Rape

1333 Locust Street, Suite 202

Philadelphia, PA 19107

215-985-3315

24 hour hotline: 215-985-3333

*Counseling, education, legal advocacy, support groups and medical accompaniment to the emergency room.

Women's law Project

125 South 9th Street, Suite 300

Philadelphia, PA 19107

215-928-9801

*Services offered over the phone; no walk-ins

*Sources: Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania information via Deborah Delgado, TBI Project Directo, 6/2009; www.aclupa.org; www.equalemployment.org; www.drnpa.org; Client Assistance Program Info via Lee Lippi, Senior CAP Advocate Harrisburg Office, 6/2009; <http://www.rhls.org/PULP.asp>; www.phlp.org; Verified via Robin Handwerger, Primary care social worker, 8/2009 and Torri Osterholm, VJO coordinator, 8/2010.